



Unintentional Fall Death Rates, Age-Adjusted Clark County and Washington State, 1994 through 2001

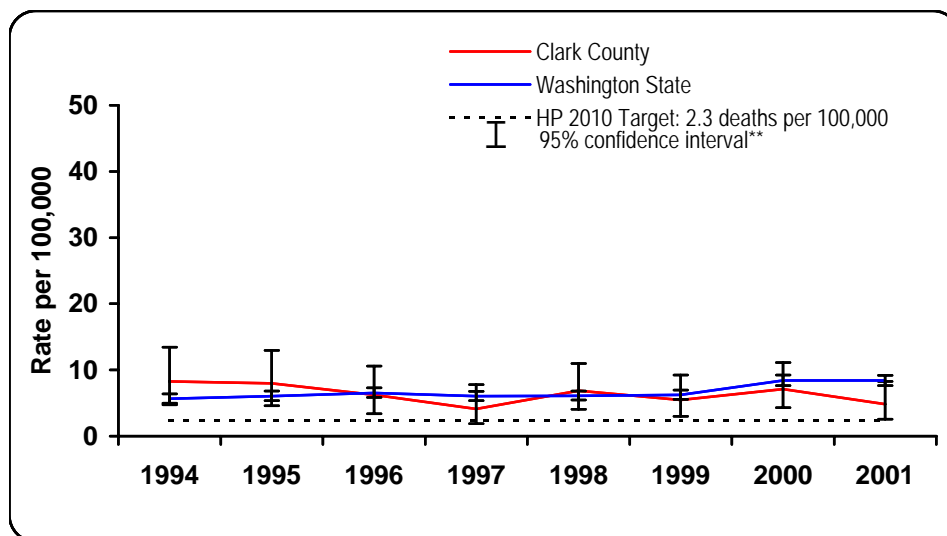
Why we should care? Among older adults, falls are the most common cause of injuries and hospital admissions for trauma. (1) Each year in the United States, one person in 20 receives emergency department treatment because of a fall. Advanced age greatly increases the chance of a hospital admission following a fall. (1) For adults 65 years old or older, 60% of fatal falls happen at home, 30% occur in public places, and 10% occur in health care institutions. (1)

Status?

- Since mid-1998, the rate of Unintentional Fall Deaths in Clark County has been below that of Washington State.
- Clark County is rapidly approaching the Healthy People 2010 target value.

What we can do?

- Gait training and advice on the appropriate use of assistive devices (such as canes and walkers). (2)
- Exercise programs, including balance and strength training. (2)
- Modification of environmental hazards (safe footwear and removal of hazards in the home). (2)
- Review and modification of medications (in particular, sedatives and antidepressants). (2)
- Treatment of postural hypotension (drop in blood pressure and dizziness on standing). (2)
- Treatment of cardiovascular disorders, including cardiac arrhythmias. (2)



Year	Clark County			Washington State		
	Rate*	95% CI**	Number	Rate*	95% CI**	Number
1994	8.3	(4.8, 13.5)	17	5.7	(5.0, 6.4)	262
1995	8.0	(4.6, 12.9)	17	6.1	(5.4, 6.8)	286
1996	6.3	(3.4, 10.6)	14	6.5	(5.8, 7.3)	319
1997	4.1	(1.9, 7.8)	9	6.0	(5.4, 6.8)	303
1998	6.9	(4.1, 11.0)	18	6.1	(5.5, 6.8)	317
1999	5.5	(3.0, 9.2)	14	6.2	(5.6, 6.9)	333
2000	7.1	(4.3, 11.1)	20	8.4	(7.7, 9.2)	458
2001	4.8	(2.6, 8.3)	13	8.4	(7.7, 9.2)	469

Please see reverse side for technical notes and sources



Technical Notes: The age-adjusted death rate is defined as the number of deaths per 100,000 standard population after removing the effects of age on mortality.

*Rate per 100,000 population adjusted using the 2000 U.S. Standard Population; deaths coded using ICD 10.

** If the confidence intervals for state and county overlap in a given year, there is no significant difference between these rates.

Sources: (1) <http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/factsheets/falls.htm> (2) Vital Registration System, Annual Statistics Files, Deaths 1980-2001. [Data file]. Olympia, WA: Washington State Department of Health, Center for Health Statistics. (3) Public Health: Seattle & King County, Epidemiology, Planning, & Evaluation (1991-2003). VistaPHw (Version 3.1.1) [Computer software for public health assessment]. Seattle, WA.